

The James Whitall Jr. House
National Park
Gloucester County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-576

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The James Whitall Jr. House
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Owner: Luther S. Henley

Date of Erection: 1766

Architect:

Builder: James Whitall Jr.

Present Condition: Well preserved, original condition,
with veranda porches modern

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone and
brick

Exterior walls - brick

Interior walls - lath and
plaster on studding

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable end
walls

Roof - tin

Historical Data:

By a deed of 4 May 1767, James Whitall of
Deptford Township, Gloucester County, "for and in
consideration of the Love, good will and natural
affection which I have for my loving son, James
Whitall Jr., do give and grant to said James Whitall
Jr. 100 acres of land, being part and parcel of the
tract whereon I now live, fifty acres there of upland
whereon his the said James Whitall Jr's. house stands,

to be laid out the most commodious and convenient to accommodate the said house; and fifty acres of meadow ground, the nearest and most convenient to the fifty acres of upland; so as for the whole 100 acres to be on the east side of a partition line run from Woodbury Creek to the back line of said tract". (Recorded in Gloucester County Deed Book D., page 30).

The house here surveyed stands on a plot 225 feet deep by 305 feet frontage on the southeast side of modern Grove Avenue (formerly the Mantua Grove and Red Bank Turnpike) below Hessian Avenue and above Woodbury Creek, a very small parcel of its original 100 acre farm, and in the modern borough of "National Park", formerly part of Deptford Township.

The house bears the figures 1766 in the brickwork of its southeast gable end, a date of erection by James Whitall Jr. which is a year previous to that of the deed from his father above cited, in which this house is particularly mentioned, and two years after his marriage. This James Whitall Jr. was born 22nd of 12 mo. 1741/2*, son of the James and Ann (Cooper) Whitall of the nearby more famous house (NJ-79) and he died 18th of 2 mo. 1796*, evidently in his own house. He was married at Haddonfield Meeting House on 19th of 4 mo. 1764** to Rebekah Matlack, daughter of Richard and Mary Matlack of Waterford Township, in this County (a sister of that Abraham Matlack whose home between Moorestown and Evesboro, in Mt. Laurel Township, Burlington County (NJ-504) is known by tradition as having been occupied as headquarters by General Sir Henry Clinton). Rebekah (Matlack) Whitall was born 13th of 9 mo. 1746, and died 23rd of 9 mo. 1797* evidently in the house here considered. Among the twelve children of this marriage were six sons, James, born 5.11.1770; Richard 5. 3. 1772; George, 6. 18. 1774; George II, 6.5.1776; William, 7.25.1778; and Abraham, 3. 30. 1782.*

*Dates of births and deaths from records of Woodbury Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, ms. copy in Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania.

**Date of marriage from records of Haddonfield Monthly Meeting; ms. copy as above.

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Three months after the death of James Whitall Jr. his eldest son and heir, James Whitall, transferred the property as ninety-five acres to the fourth son William Whitall, by a quitclaim deed of 14 May 1796, and the last named, by his will of 16 April 1806, bequeathed all his real estate, including this property to his said brother James M. Whitall, who by his will of 14 April 1813 ordered all his real estate to be sold. And accordingly, his executor, Robert L. Armstrong, conveyed this property as part of a 209 acre tract to Mark Brown by Deed of 28 June 1819.

Brown by his Deed of 1 April 1829, conveyed the same 209 acres to James Jessup, from whom it came into possession of David C. Jessup by 1894, on 12th of March in which year it was transferred by Sheriff's deed to William W. Heroy after foreclosure proceedings. Subsequently, by deed of 10 January 1895, Heroy conveyed this house and the 209 acres to James W. Baird, who in turn passed it by deed of 6 May to John D. Phillips, and he to the National Park Association by his of 17 May in same year. The last named transferred 1.58 acres with the house back to Baird by deed of 28 July 1896, after which it went to Frank A. Lelar 1906, to John B. Betts, trustee of the estate of Richard V. Betts, by foreclosure 1909, to Raymond L. Warren 1912 (described as a two and one-half story brick dwelling and frame stables), to Wesley H. Walton 1913, to Anna M. Warren 1913, to David S. English 1914, to Thomas B. Whitney 1914, to Luther S. Henley 1923, present owner and occupant (1938).

Bibliography:

A search of title in Gloucester County
Land and Probate records by Oscar F.
Benjamin, H.A.B.S. abstractor

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

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